

Injury-hit Ilford sunk by James hat-trick

Sports Mail Special Report

ILFORD 2 : WYCOMBE WAND 5

Ilford scored the first goal at Newbury Park but Wycombe came back with two great goals from James and Blair, and in the second-half James completed his hat-trick. Ilford, hit by injuries, missed two penalties.

Ilford: Fudge; Neale, Cross; McKendry, Whittall, Dodkins; Hanley, Heywood, Christmas, Wolfe, Long.

Wycombe Wanderers: Brown; Beck, Lewis; Thomas, Fisher, Gale; Worley, Blair, James, Holmes, Rockell.

Referee: R W Rush.

Wycombe opened strongly against an Ilford side weakened by four changes. From the kick-off James broke through on the right and goalkeeper Fudge did well to save at the expense of a corner.

A minute later, after clever work by Rockell and Holmes, James shot wildly over the bar.

Wycombe, however, had an escape when a drive from Heywood was luckily kicked off the line by Fisher.

Their defence, in fact, looked shaky against a fast Ilford attack. Bad marking allowed Christmas to head in, though he was ruled offside. But after 25 minutes Ilford took the lead.

From a corner on the right Christmas headed goalwards. Brown had the ball covered but HEYWOOD diverted it past him from close range.

Ilford's three reserve forwards, Hanley, Heywood and Wolfe, gave the Wycombe defence a worrying time with their speed and determination.

EVENTFUL MINUTE

After 31 minutes, however, Wycombe broke away and JAMES equalised with a terrific cross-shot into the top of the net.

In the same minute a penalty against Wycombe for a foul by Fisher, was taken by Whittall. Brown saved his first shot and the second from the rebound. hit a post. Then Christmas came in to shoot wide.

It was Whittall's third penalty miss this season.

BLAIR gave Wycombe in the lead, ten minutes later, with a brilliantly-placed ground shot from a pass by James.

Half-time: Ilford 1, Wycombe Wanderers 2.

Seven minutes after half-time JAMES ran through to a long ball from Thomas to score Wycombe's third goal. Two minutes later JAMES completed a hat-trick when he beat Neale and scored from the left of the penalty area.

After 65 minutes Ilford reduced their arrears when a centre from their outside left, Long, was headed into the goal-mouth and Brown could only touch the ball for CHRISTMAS to head in.

Ilford were now hitting back and after 70 minutes, left back Cross took the ball into the penalty area, only to be brought down by Worley.

Ilford right-half McKendry drove the penalty straight at Brown, who thus saved his second penalty of the match.

With nine minutes to go HOLMES went up to head in Wycombe's fifth goal from a cross by Rockell.

RESULT:

ILFORD 2
WYCOMBE WAND. 5

BROWN SAVES PENALTIES

Ilford 2 Wycombe W. 5

B LACK day for Ilford. With a weakened side they took the lead. Then came two missed penalties and two disallowed "goals," both offside.

With Wycombe leading 4-2 in the second half, Ilford back Eric Cross went up into the penalty area, was brought down, and McKendry tried his luck from the spot. Goalkeeper Brown saved.

A spirited Ilford attack had Wycombe defending early on, and Christmas's header was diverted past Brown by Heywood for the first goal, after 25 minutes. Then Wycombe's experience told, and six minutes later James equalised.

In the same minute came Ilford's first penalty. Whittall shot straight at Brown and then fired the rebound against a post. In went Christmas—to shoot wide.

Four minutes before the interval inside-right Blair put Wycombe ahead with a brilliant shot.

Showing something like their former class, the Wycombe forwards had Ilford's defence at sea, and after 52 minutes James raced through to a long pass from Thomas and increased the lead. Merciless Wycombe made the score 4-1 as James completed the hat-trick in the 56th minute with another well-contrived goal.

Spirited Ilford scored soon afterwards, Christmas headed home a centre by Long. Then came Ilford's second penalty miss.

Nine minutes from the end, with Wycombe's forwards apparently taking it easy, Holmes headed in a cross by Rockell.

Sympathy to Ilford leader Alf Christmas, who netted twice with Offside as the verdict.